LAFAYETTE VISTAS

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Lafayette Stimulates the Downtown

Lafayette has not been as badly impacted by foreclosures and declining property tax revenues as other cities. But the City has over the last few months lost some important businesses, including the Hungry Hunter, Keenan Heinz, and Hollywood Video. These business departures mean less sales tax revenue for Lafayette and so, in an effort to invigorate the local economy, the Lafayette City Council recently approved a stimulus package aimed at encouraging downtown business and development. The package, which remains in effect through 2009, includes the following items:

- Fees for sign permits will be waived. This should encourage businesses to spruce up their storefronts and eliminate visual clutter, making the downtown more inviting for shoppers.
- The City will cover the cost for sidewalk improvements and street trees required as a condition of development.
- Recognizing that development in both the downtown and in residential districts may be stalled due to cash flow or credit availability problems, all land use permits that would have expired between February 23rd and the end of the year will automatically be extended for one additional year. This will give applicants some leeway to put together workable financing packages.
- The waste management security fee will be waived. Businesses and homeowners in the midst of renovation or building are typically required to deposit money as security that the contractor will properly dispose of debris. Recognizing that this requires cash and could stall development, the City will waive the security fee (but still, of course, monitor the disposal).
- Typically, if a tenant whose use no longer conforms to the City's zoning requirements shuts down, the landowner has 120 days to replace the space with the same use. If the deadline is not met, any new tenant needs to conform to the zoning requirements. Under the stimulus plan, however, the City will give landowners more time to replace vacant properties with the prior non-conforming uses. This should help landowners find new businesses to occupy the vacant storefronts, stimulate commercial activity in the downtown, and increase sales tax revenues.

While the cost of this stimulus package is nowhere near the $800 billion spent by the Federal government, it might help developers with their improvement plans, keep the downtown lively during this difficult economic cycle, and allow for recovery to happen more quickly once the economy improves.

Think Globally, Shop Locally

In December, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce launched a campaign to remind residents to "**TRY LAFAYETTE FIRST!**" when buying gifts, hiring services, and dining out. So far, the response has been outstanding: we've heard dozens of stories from residents who decided to patronize a local merchant rather than making purchases online or out of town.

Why does it make sense to "**TRY LAFAYETTE FIRST!**"?

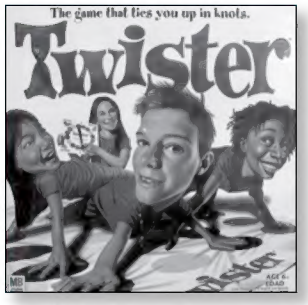
- Lafayette keeps 1% of the sales tax paid within the City. These sales taxes support many public services including public safety, road repair and park maintenance.
- Local businesses are the largest employer nationwide, hiring primarily local residents including high schoolers and senior citizens.
- Local business owners often live in our community and are invested in the community's future.
- Local merchants provide greater customer service and may have a higher level of expertise about their products and services.
- Local shopping requires less transportation. Because Lafayette merchants are right here in town, residents save on gas and parking while reducing their carbon footprint.
- Local businesses provide the distinctive character and culture our community enjoys, and successful local businesses attract more of the same.
- Local businesses support local non-profits.

Join the others who have taken the pledge to "**TRY LAFAYETTE FIRST!**" by visiting the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce website at **www.lafayettechamber.org.** By taking the pledge you're eligible to win $500 in local gift certificates and services.

As a thank you to Lafayette residents who help keep local merchants in the black by shopping locally, the Chamber is throwing a community BBQ on Friday, June 5th between 5:00–8:00pm at Plaza Park (corner of Mt. Diablo Blvd. & Moraga Rd.). Come meet local merchants, business owners and neighbors and enjoy free food, music and good times.

Just a reminder that, in addition to putting on the annual Art & Wine Festival and the Reservoir Run, the Chamber is a great community resource for businesses and residents alike. Need information about local schools, a recommendation on good painter or where to buy running shoes? Need a place to hold a meeting? A map of the area? The Chamber has it! The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce is located at 100 Lafayette Circle, #103 and can be reached at 925-284-7404.

Who Knew You Could Buy



1: Twister Game

2: Quality Bed Linens

3: Alphabet Beads

4: Men's Shoes

9: Printer Cartridge

10: Carbon Fiber Spoked Wheel

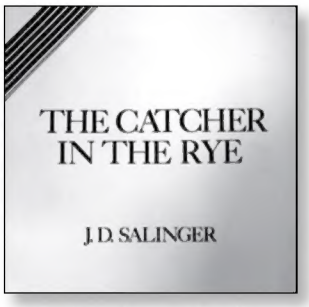
11: Motorized Pool Lounge

12: Torani Syrups

17: Abba Zabba Candy

18: Doll

19: Rugby Ball



20: Catcher in the Rye

25: Chocolate Cup Cake

26: Sicilian Wine

27: Skateboard Wheels

28: Frosted Dog Biscuits

33: Decorative Mailbox

34: Arborio Rice

35: Hand Crafted Medallion Necklace

36: Hoover Vaccum

Can you identify where each of these items

All of This in Lafayette?

5: Kandy Kakes

6: Lacrosse Equipment

7: Perfect Chocolate Donut

8: Lafayette Brie

13: Blue Hair Color

14: Decorative Clock

15: Paris Street Maps

16: Clam Chowder To Go

21: Designer Eye Glasses

22: Wedding Invitations

23: Big Game Repellent

24: Singaporean Noodles

29: Hand Decorated Plate

30: Fun Buttons

31: Acoustic Guitar

32: Camera Memory Card

37: Eames Chair

38: Foam Cowboy Hat

39: Radiator Flush

40: Jeweled Evening Purse

can be purchased? Answers on the back page.

Is Lamorinda Prepared for Wildfires?

Fire season is approaching and the threat to Lamorinda is expected to be very high after three years of drought. The joint Lamorinda emergency preparedness committees will hold a workshop to provide information on the potential threats of the upcoming 2009 fire season and what you can do to prepare. Topics will include:

- Current threat assessments for Lamorinda
- Evacuation planning including pets
- Fire resistant construction and landscaping
- Neighborhood and family emergency plans and communication
- Available resources to facilitate neighborhood safety improvements

The Keynote speakers are the California State Assistant Fire Marshall Tonya Hoover and CAL FIRE Battalion Chief Rob Van Wormer. These speakers will be joined by our local fire and police representatives along with emergency preparedness group leaders.

The program will be held on April 29th from 7:00-9:00 pm at the Orinda Library Auditorium (26 Orinda Way). Registration will begin at 6:30 pm in the Atrium Lobby (2nd Floor). In order to ensure a seat at the event, or if you have questions, please contact Jonathan Goodwin at **CanyonFire@vfemail.net**. **If you live in an area threatened by wildfire, you should attend this meeting.**

Answers to Inside Photos

1: Twister Game, *Handlebar Toys*
2: Quality Bed Linens, *Misto Lino*
3: Alphabet Beads, *Beadazzled*
4: Men's Shoes, *McCaulou's*
5: Kandy Kakes, *Philly Cheesesteak*
6: Lacrosse Equipment, *NorSki*
7: Perfect Chocolate Donut, *Johnny's Donuts*
8: Lafayette Brie, *Diablo Foods*
9: Printer Cartridge, *Contra Costa Stationers*
10: Carbon Fiber Spoked Wheel, *Sharp Bicycles*
11: Motorized Pool Lounge, *Leslie's Pool Supplies*
12: Torani Syrups, *Open Sesame*
13: Blue Hair Color, *Pure Beauty*
14: Decorative Clock, *Clocks Etc.*
15: Paris Street Maps, *Papyrus*
16: Clam Chowder To Go, *Yankee Pier*
17: Abba Zabba Candy, *Powell's*
18: Doll, *Whippersnappers*
19: Rugby Ball, *Soccer Post*
20: The Catcher in the Rye, *Lafayette Book Store*
21: Designer Eye Glasses, *Art & Science of Eyeware*
22: Wedding Invitations, *Madison*
23: Big Game Repellent, *Diamond K*
24: Singaporean Noodles, *Kopitiam*
25: Chocolate Cup Cake, *Teacake*
26: Sicilian Wine, *Wine Thieves*
27: Skateboard Wheels, *MiloSport*
28: Frosted Dog Biscuits, *Nitro Dog*
29: Hand Decorated Plate, *Color Me Mine*
30: Fun Buttons, *Big Sky Luxury Yarns*
31: Acoustic Guitar, *Campana Music*
32: Camera Memory Card, *Wolf Camera*
33: Decorative Mailbox, *Orchard Nursery*
34: Arborio Rice, *A.G. Ferrari*
35: Hand Crafted Medallion Necklace, *Lafayette Gallery*
36: Hoover Vaccum, *Ace Hardware*
37: Eames Chair, *Design Within Reach*
38: Foam Cowboy Hat, *Boswell's*
39: Radiator Flush, *NAPA Auto*
40: Jeweled Evening Purse, *Sandy's*

City Directory

For Council Members call: **284-1968**

Council Members

Don Tatzin	**Mayor**
Brandt Andersson	**Vice Mayor**
Mike Anderson	**Council Member**
Carl Anduri	**Council Member**
Carol Federighi	**Council Member**

Messages to **all** Council Members:
cityhall@lovelafayette.org

Administration

General Reception and	**284-1968**
Steven Falk, City Manager	**Fax: 284-3169**
Tracy Robinson, Admin. Srv. Dir.	**299-3227**
Gonzalo Silva, Financial Srv. Mgr.	**299-3213**
Joanne Robbins, City Clerk	**299-3210**

Community Development

Ann Merideth, Director	**299-3218**
Tony Coe, Engineering Srv. Mgr.	**284-1951**
Niroop Srivatsa, Planning Srv. Mgr.	**284-1976**
Ron Lefler, Public Works Srv. Mgr.	**299-3214**
P.W. Hotline (to report problems)	**299-3259**

If you observe illegal dumping in creeks & storm drains or accidental spills on roads, call Contra Costa Hazardous Materials Division 646-2286.

Lamorinda School Bus Program

Juliet Hansen, Program Mgr.	**299-3216**
	Or 299-3215

Parks, Trails and Recreation **284-2232**

Jennifer Russell, Director

Senior Services	**284-5050**

Police Services

Emergency: 24 Hours	**911**
Police Dispatch: 24 Hours	**284-5010**
Police Business Office:	**283-3680**

Anonymous Tipline, Traffic Enforcement, Suggestions & LEARN (Laf. Emergency Action Response Network), 299-3232 X 2205

Fax	**284-3169**
Address	**3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd. #210, Lafayette, CA 94549**
Website	**www.ci.lafayette.ca.us**

E-MAIL: Council/staff members can be reached via e-mail using this address format:
First Initial + Last Name @lovelafayette.org
Example: SFalk@lovelafayette.org

Want more City news online? Subscribe to the *City Manager's Weekly Summary* by sending an email to sfalk@lovelafayette.org

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